

Message Text

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60-53

ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 EUR-10 NSC-10 NSCE-00 PM-03 L-02

IO-03 PRS-01 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 DODE-00

DPW-01 RSR-01 SSO-00 PA-01 USIE-00 INRE-00 /071 W
----- 060277

O R 141030 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1650

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL DANANG

USDEL JEC PARIS

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

XCRUMJBT/ AMEMBASSY JAKARTA 1846

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

CINCPAC

CDRUSSAG NKP RTAFB IMMEDIATE

COMUSMACHTAI BANGKOK

DAO/ SAIGON/ AOSOP- OR

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LIMDIS

CORRECTED COPY - TEXT

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PINS MILI VS

SUBJECT: VIETNAM CEASEFIRE WEEKLY ASSESSMENT, MAY 6-12, 1973

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

1. SUMMARY: MILITARILY, THE WEEK DIFFERED LITTLE FROM THE PREVIOUS REPORTING PERIOD; THE NUMBER OF INCIDENTS CONTINUED TO BE LOW AND CONCENTRATED IN THE SAME GENERAL AREAS AS IN THE PAST. GVN FORCES TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE LOW LEVEL OF MILITARY ACTIVITY TO CONSOLIDATE POSITIONS IN SOME AREAS. THE GVN COMPLETED ITS PART OF THE SCHEDULED CIVILIAN DETAINEE RELEASES, BUT PRG RELEASES WERE DELAYED, DUE TO A LACK OF PRG ASSURANCES OF SAFETY FOR ICCS OBSERVER TEAMS. THE ICCS CONTINUED INVESTIGATIONS, SOMEWHAT HAMPERED BY CONTINUING RESTRICTIONS ON HELICOPTER FLIGHTS, HOWEVER, THE RESULTS CONTINUED TO REFLECT NOW TRADITIONAL POLDEL/ HUNGDEL V. CANDEL/ INDODEL SPLIT. THE JCRC, ACTING THROUGH THE FPJMT, CONDUCTED THE FIRST IN- COUNTRY CRASH SITE INSPECTION. DISCUSSIONS IN THE TPJMC CONTINUED ON CEASEFIRE ENFORCEMENT WITH SOME SLIGHT MOVEMENT BUT NO DEFINITIVE PROGRESS. THE PRG CHARGED AND THE US DENIED BOMBING IN SVN BY US PLANES.

2. MILITARY ACTION, AS REFLECTED IN BOTH THE NUMBER OF INCIDENTS AND CASUALTY FIGURES CONTINUED TO BE RELATIVELY LOW AND EVEN FELL SLIGHTLY IN MR' S 1, 2 AND 3. COMBAT CONTINUED TO BE CONCENTRATED IN THE USUAL AREAS-- NORTHWEST OF HUE, NORTHERN BINH DINH, TONG LE CHAN AND CHUONG THIEN-- BUT SLACKED OFF ALONG THE CAMBODIAN BORDER AT HONG NGU AS VC/ NVA UNITS DREW BACK FOR REFITTING. RVNAF MOVED TO IMPROVE ITS POSITION IN MR 1; THE AIRBORNE SHIFTED ITS AO TO THE LEFT (WITH THE MARINES ALSO SHIFTING LEFT TO COVER) IN ORDER TO STRENGTHEN POSITIONS OF THE 1 ST DIVISION AO IN THE CO BI/ AN LO AREA NORTHWEST OF HUE. RVNAF ALSO CONTINUED TO EXPAND AND CONSOLIDATE GOVERNMENT CONTROL IN NORTHERN BINH DINH PROVINCE IN MR 2. IN MR 3 AN USAID CONTRACT EMPLOYEE, DR. WILLIAM RASMUSSEN, AND TWO VIETNAMESE OFFICIALS WERE KILLED WHEN THEIR JEEP STRUCK A MINE IN CONFIDENTIAL

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BINH TUY PROVINCE. REPORTS CONTINUE TO STRESS VC/ NVA ROAD BUILDING ACTIVITY AND IMPROVEMENT OF AIRSTRIPS, ESPECIALLY IN MR' S 1 AND 2.

3. DURING THE WEEK, THE GVN COMPLETED ITS PART IN THE EXCHANGE OF CIVILIAN DETAINEES BY RELEASING 615 PRISONERS AT QUANG TRI (99 WERE RELEASED EARLIER AT LOC NINH). A TOTAL OF 35 OF THE

SCHEDULED 650 PERSONS DECLINED RELEASE DURING THE OPERATION
CAUSING

A CONTRETEMPS WITH THE PRG THAT DELAYED THE RELEASE OF THE THIRD
TRANCHE OF 250 PERSONS FROM MAY 9 TO MAY 11. THE SCHEDULED
RELEASE OF PRG- HELD PRISONERS AT VARIOUS PLACES THROUGHOUT THE
COUNTRY CONTINUED TO BE POSTPONED. THE DELAY IS DUE TO THE
FACT THAT THE GVN, CITING ART. 5(B) OF THE ICCS PROTOCOL, IS NOT
WILLING TO ACCEPT THE RELEASED PRISONERS WITHOUT THE PRESENCE
OF ICCS OBSERVERS. THE ICCS, IN TURN, IS UNWILLING TO DEPLOY
TO THE PROPOSED RELEASE SITES WITHOUT PRG ASSURANCES FOR THEIR
SAFETY. THE ICCS PROPOSED AS A SAFETY ZONE AN AIR CORRIDOR OF
EIGHT KILOMETERS WIDE; WHILE THE PRG INSISTED ON A CORRIDOR ONLY
FOUR KILOMETERS WIDE; DURING THE WEEK, THE CANDEL/ INDODEL REJECTED
A POLDEL- ARRANGED COMPROMISE OF A SIX KILOMETER- WIDE
CORRIDOR. THERE THE MATTER STANDS.

4. THAT CANDEL/ INDODEL APPREHENSIONS MAY NOT BE MISPLACED WAS
INDICATED BY TWO AIRCRAFT INCIDENTS DURING THE WEEK. AN ICCS
HELICOPTER ON A ROUTINE COURIER FLIGHT WAS FIRED UPON AND HIT
NEAR VI THANH IN CHUONG THIEN ON MAY 6. THERE WERE NO CASUALTIES.
ON MAY 11, TWO TPJMT- MARKED HELICOPTERS RETURNING PRG
REPRESENTATIVES FROM A LIAISON FLIGHT TO LOC NINH WERE FIRED UPON
SOUTH OF AN LOC, WITH ONE CHOPPER BEING
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QUESTIONS, THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE DISCUSSION AND SOME TENTATIVE MOVEMENT BY BOTH SIDES. THE RVN POSITION IS THE TPJMC HAS EASED TO ALLOW SUCH MEETINGS TO EXTEND DOWN TO THE SUB- SECTOR OR REGIMENTAL LEVEL, BUT THE PRG CONTINUED TO PUSH IN THE TPJMC FOR MEETINGS AT ALL LEVELS INCLUDING THE INDIVIDUAL SOLDIER IN THE FIELD. RVN ALSO PROPOSED THAT TPJMC SELECT A SINGLE " TEST AREA" AND SEEK TO WORK OUT LOCAL CEASEFIRE THROUGH MEETINGS AT DIVISION COMMANDER LEVEL. MAY 12 PRG PRESS RELEASE CALLED FOR MEETINGS OF LOCAL COMMANDERS AT BATTALION LEVEL. THE SAME PRESS RELEASE CALLED FOR AN " EXPERIMENTAL ZONE" WHERE GVN AND PRG POPULATIONS COULD DEVELOP WAYS OF LIVING PEACEFULLY.

7. THE PRG TWICE CHARGED IN NOTES TO THE ICCS ON MAY 12 AND 13 THAT US PLANES WERE BOMBING IN SOUTH VIETNAM IN THE AREA NORTH OF LOC NINH AND ASKED FOR AN IMMEDIATE INVESTIGATION. THE EMBASSY DENIED THE CHARGES ON BOTH OCCASIONS.

8. THE MIA/ BNR RESOLUTION FUNCTION OF THE FPJMT KICKED OFF DURING THE WEEK WITH A TWO- DAY (MAY 7 & 8) INSPZCTION OF A CRASH SITE IN LONG AN PROVINCE BY A JCRC SPECIALIST TEAM. ALTHOUGH SOME PERSONAL EFFECTS WERE LOCATED, NO REMAINS WERE FOUND. TWO MORE CRASH SITE INSPECTIONS ARE SCHEDULED FOR MR-4 IN THE COMING WEEK. THIS WEEK, THE US PROVIDED THE OTHER DELEGATIONS OF THE FPJMT/ MIA WITH LISTS OF 1444 US AND 3 RD COUNTRY MIA AND 1114 BNR.

9. AN FPJMT/ MIA TEAM, INCLUDING AN 8 MAN US SLEMENT TOOK THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS THE RECOVERY OF U. S. POW' S WHO DIED IN CAPTIVITY. THE TEAM VISITED REPORTED ORIGINAL GRAVESITES OF US POW' S IN THE HANOI AREA ON MAY 11. MOST OF THESE REMAINS WERE NO LONGER AT THIS LOCATION BUT HAD BEEN REMOVED TO AN UNSPECIFIED SITE OUTSIDE OF

HANOI. CONTRARY TO EXPECTATIONS THE TEAM WAS UNABLE TO DISCUSS RECOVERY PROCEDURES DURING THAT VISIT. DRV OFFICIALS INDICATED SUCH DISCUSSIONS WOULD BE PURSUED IN THE FPJMT/ MIA IN SAIGON AND BY A US TEAM WHICH WILL TRAVEL TO HANOI PROBABLY ON MAY 18 FOR MEETINGS WITH LOCAL DRV OFFICIALS.

10. ASIDE FROM THE ABORTED PRG RELEASE OF PRISONERS, THE ICCS CONTINUED ITS INVESTIGATIONS OF CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS, ALBEIT
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SOMEWHAT HAMPERED BY THE KONTINUING RESTRICTION ON HELICOPTER FLIGHTS IN THE ABSENCE OF FIRM PRG ASSURANCES OF SAFETY. THE REGION I ICCS COMPLETED ITS FINAL REPORT ON THE PARIL 7 HELICOPTER INCIDENT ON MAY 10. THE REPORT REFLECTED THE SPLIT IN THE CHIP DELS WHICH CONTINUES TO PREVENT ANY MEANINGFUL ICCS RESULTS. THE UNGDEL CONCLUDED THAT IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE EXACTLY WHAT HAPPENED TO THE TWO- HELICOPTER FLIGHT, WHILE THE POLDEL ADMITTED ONLY THAT THERE HAD BEEN SOME FIRING IN THE AREA. THE CANDEL REPORT CHARGED THAT THE DOWNED CHOPPER, NO. 006, HAD BEEN HIT BY A MISSILE. THE INDODEL REPORT STRONGLY FASTENED THE BLAME ON THE PRG, HINTING DARKLY THAT THE WHOLE INCIDENT HAD BEEN PLANNED. BESIDES THE FRUSTRATING SPLIT- DECISION INVESTIGATIONS, THE ONLY OTHER ICCS ACHIEVEMENT OF THE WEEK WAS TO COMPLETE THE EXTRACTION OF THE DUC CO POE TEAM IN MR 2. AS THE TIME FOR A NEW CANADIAN DECISION ON ICCS PARTICIPATION NEARS, DIFFERING PREDICTIONS ARE HEARD FOR CANADIAN SOURCES; EXTAFFERS ARE ON THE PESSIMISTIC SIDE WHILE CANADIAN MILITARY REPS TEND TO FAVOR AND PREDICT A CONTINUED CANADIAN PRESENCE.

11. DURING THE WEEK, THE 32 BATTALION (PLUS) OF FANK 15 TH BRIGADE WITHDREW FROM CAMBODIA INTO CHAU DOC PROVINCE UNDER ENEMY PRESSURE. THE BATTALION RETURNED TO CAMBODIA STILL SHORT ON SUPPLIES AND DETERMINATION BUT REMAINED HOVERING ON THE BORDER. AT WEEKS END THE PROBLEM OF RETURNING THE 700 SOME TROOPS AND 1500 DEPENDENTS TO AREAS MORE FIRMLY UNDER PHNOM PENH' S CONTROL REMAINED.
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